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INFORMATION CALENDAR

OFFICE OF INFORMATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

July 3, 1943

No. 13

'NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THE WAR EFFORT'

"In accepting the responsibilities of the office of War Food Administrator, I do so with the firm belief that nothing is more important to the war effort and our domestic economy than a sound and acceptable food production and distribution program....

"Full use should be made of state, county, and community organizations. Food is not produced in offices in Washington. It is produced in the far stretches of this big country. No program can be effective unless it has the support of the American people on a war-time basis."

From a statement by Judge Marvin Jones,
WFA Administrator. (USDA Release 2693-43)

ROAMING RATION COUPONS

Trouble's brewing when ration stamps stray from coupon books and begin changing hands like currency. Loose stamps mean somebody gets more than his share of rationed foods, upsetting allocation plans and breeding black marketeering.

The farm sector is vital in this fight against inflation. A recent survey indicates that the 27½ million adults and children living in farm homes have 66 percent of the unneeded red stamps, a vast reservoir of potential trouble.

Ration stamps aren't currency. Nor are they legally transferable. They're valid only as detached from books at the time a purchase is made. (Only exception is the 1-point red stamp, which may be used in making point change.) If stamps are unneeded, they should be destroyed when they expire. If you have stamps left over, that shows you don't need them--and you should not give them away.

An emergency campaign on this problem is coming your way pronto. Its aim is to tether the strays and urge their destruction. A fact sheet will be distributed soon, explaining whys and wherefores.

WINTER WILL COME Even late-comers to the ranks of Victory Gardeners have a chance to produce a lot of food this year. There's still time to get in late summer and fall garden crops in most sections of the country, as USDA Release 2701-43 points out. Good point to emphasize is that crops from fall gardens provide the bulk of vegetables for storing for cold weather consumption.

NON-SPECULATIVE CORN

There's no point in holding corn on farms now in hope of a higher ceiling later (USDA Release 2713-43). And there's every reason for moving corn to war industry and to feeders in deficit areas. Unfounded rumors that ceilings prices will be raised have caused farmers to hold corn. Because industry and feeders need corn badly, these rumors have had a destructive influence. The press release cited above promises farmers who deliver between now and August 10 that they'll get retroactive benefit of any ceiling increase by October 31. This does not imply there's going to be a ceiling boost -- and all info should make this crystal clear -- but the assurance is given to undo the harm caused by the rumors. Info now can help move the corn along.

EAT SURPLUS POTATOES NOW!

New potatoes are plentiful now and not suitable for storage. If they aren't consumed promptly, they'll spoil. To avoid this waste of food, consumers buy and eat the surplus immediately.

To help info workers tell the story, a special kit is on the way. It contains background, news releases, radio spots, suggested store ad and poster. The potato flood will ebb by July 15, so the buying and eating -- as well as the info job -- must be done now.

USDA Release 2675-43 tells the consumer side of the story and an assurance of support for the potato market for producers is given in USDA Release 2676-43.

BLACK MARKET BATTERIES

Farmers will want to know that retail prices of farm batteries -- for radios, telephones, machinery ignition systems -- are frozen at the dealer's March 1942 level. OPA says it has had many complaints that farm radio battery packs normally retailing for an average of \$5 to \$7 are now going at \$10 to \$14. Sellers asking increased prices should be reported to the nearest War Price and Rationing Board for action. Payment of unauthorized premium prices, states OPA, amounts to encouragement of a black market in farm batteries. See OPA Release 2744.

-----BETTER COTTON FOR VICTORY-----

Due to break soon after mid-July is a drive sponsored jointly by WPB, War Department, FDA, Extension and Cotton Council to improve cotton quality by better picking and ginning.

Materials will include Army-prepared posters for gins, cards for wagons, stories and mats for papers. Distribution will be to gins and county agents, with notification copies going to AAA chairmen and vocational agriculture teachers. Watch for it.

WANTED: VEGETABLES

Now's the time to plan winter vegetable acreages, and WEA wants it known the nation can use the same high production of the two seasons past. Due to urgent needs, growers are asked to give preference to potatoes, cabbage, kale, spinach and other green, leafy vegetables, as detailed in USDA Release 2684-43.

PRICES AND PLEDGES Longest offensive of the war, from all indications, will be the campaign to hold down the cost of living. That battle won't be won until full compliance in the price control program is obtained from every person who participates in any transaction involving controlled goods. OPA and OWI are preparing a master handbook on the price control push, due soon. USDA will distribute 13,000 copies -- enough to take the materials to the county levels.

A new tactic for getting consumer compliance in both the price control and rationing programs is the home front pledge for consumers. This drive will follow the mass meetings now being organized by OPA's field personnel. See Food Info Calendar 11, June 19, for details. A campaign handbook on home front pledges will be distributed to the state level and a booklet on the community organization plan will go to the county level.

-----LAGGING PRESSURE COOKERS-----

For your information, production of pressure cookers to be rationed through WBS is lagging. Manufacturers have found it impossible to hold to previous production schedules because of special problems in retooling and obtaining materials.

-----RATION TO COME-----
Nation-wide rationing of heating and cooking stoves, originally scheduled for June, is now slated for mid-August. Additional time will assure adequate distribution of application forms and other materials to War Price and Rationing Boards, as well as to dealers, distributors, manufacturers. Ration will work with purchase certificates to be obtained from ration boards.

TIME FOR ACTION

Biggest farm labor jobs for July are cultivating and harvesting, as you'll note from the forthcoming Food Info Series 26, "July Farm Labor Jobs." This month marks transition of the labor campaign from the "prepare for action" phase to the "action" phase in many localities.

Info should hit hard on specifics of where need exists, how to fill the need. It's also important to keep the emergency labor problem in the public eye, for it's not licked yet. Progress reports offer a good way to do this, especially with concrete and detailed examples.

INFO BY AIRWAVE Farm & Home Hour features are linked directly to current USDA info campaigns, as witness this week's schedule: Monday, July 5, "New Potatoes to Eat" and "One Way to Produce More Meat;" Tuesday, July 6, "When You Fry a Chicken" and "Soybean Diseases;" Wednesday, July 7, talk by Secretary Wickard; Thursday, July 8, "The Farmers Need the Victory Farm Volunteers;" Friday, July 9, "The Future for Which We Fight #1" and "The Farmer Looks Toward the Future."

NEW WRINKLE IN SLAUGHTER PERMITS

Since July 1, custom slaughterers have been required to hold permits to do custom slaughtering and to get certain information from owners of livestock to be slaughtered. Custom slaughterers formerly were exempt from registration. Application for permits should go to the County War Meat Committee. See USDA Release 2679-43.

In Food Info Series 25, info workers have a useful package of source material on other phases of the slaughter permit program. Included is a background piece on the "why" of slaughter permits and a statement on evidence required for permits. WB Memo 375 Production 46 will provide details on administrative procedure for the program.

ONE WORD FOR THE WISE The word is "share" and it applies to farm machinery. The idea is forcefully presented in a new poster, being mailed to WBs this week on the same distribution scheme as "Farmers Meet Your Goals." A four-color job, this 20" by 28" poster is a model of simplicity and packs a visual punch.

VACATIONS AT HOME That's the topic for Consumer Time (NBC, 12:15 p.m. EWT) on Saturday, July 10. Program will dramatize the problem of taking a wartime vacation under wartime restrictions and offer suggestions for relaxing at home.

NEW POINT VALUES New point values for the red and blue stamp rationing programs become effective July 4. As usual, trade point value charts for meats will be available to farmers from county WBs. For info on point value changes, see OPA Releases 2748, 2750, 2751, 2755.